

Members

Rep. Sheila Klinker, Chairperson
Rep. Greg Simms
Rep. Rochelle Vandenburg
Rep. Robert Behning
Rep. Dan Leonard
Rep. Jeffrey Thompson
Sen. Connie Lawson
Sen. Greg Walker
Sen. Brent Waltz, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. Robert Deig
Sen. Sue Errington
Sen. Karen Tallian



INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON ADULT EDUCATION ISSUES

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 3, 2008
Meeting Time: 1:00 P.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., Room 233
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. Sheila Klinker, Chairperson; Rep. Greg Simms; Rep. Rochelle Vandenburg; Rep. Robert Behning; Rep. Dan Leonard; Rep. Jeffrey Thompson; Sen. Connie Lawson; Sen. Brent Waltz, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Robert Deig; Sen. Sue Errington; Sen. Karen Tallian.

Members Absent: Sen. Greg Walker.

Representative Sheila Klinker, the chairperson of the Committee, called the meeting to order shortly after 1:00 p.m.

After discussion with Committee members, Representative Klinker tentatively scheduled a site visit by the Committee in Brownsburg at 11:30 a.m. on October 21, 2008, with a Committee meeting to follow. (Directions to the meeting site will be posted to the Legislative Services Agency's calendar of meetings.)

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

After introduction of Committee members, Rep. Klinker noted that at the recent Women in Government Conference there had been discussion of lifelong learning accounts (LiLAs). Senator Connie Lawson briefly described LiLAs and explained that other incentives for adult education had been discussed at the conference. Senator Sue Errington explained that the LiLAs are similar in concept to 401(k) accounts, but with the use of the account limited to education expenses. She also commented that one of the pilot areas for LiLAs is in northeastern Indiana, and that perhaps the State could expand on this experience.

Representative Klinker then recognized Gloria Hubbuch, president of the Indiana Association of Adult and Continuing Education (IAACE). Ms. Hubbuch explained that she is also the coordinator for adult basic education for Wayne Township in Marion County. She said that the IAACE supports members by providing information on best practices, hosting conferences, and lobbying for funding.

Ms. Hubbuch stated that the IAACE believes that the delivery of adult education services through public schools with licensed teachers is the best approach and has been a success. She testified that Indiana exceeds federal Department of Education standards for adult education.

Ms. Hubbuch described coordinating councils for adult education and also described various local adult education programs. She testified that program demands are growing without any additional financial support, and that school corporations are considering limiting or ending adult education. She stated that there has been no increase in state funding for adult education in ten years, and that school corporations are using their general funds to help pay for these programs.

Ms. Hubbuch testified that the IAACE supports the principles in the Indiana Department of Education's priorities concerning adult education. She stated that the IAACE agrees that continued refinement of those goals is needed, and that the IAACE wants to ensure that adult education services are available to all students.

Senator Karen Tallian asked whether the IAACE had any recommendations on the level of state funding necessary for current programs or for an increase in those programs. Ms. Hubbuch answered that the IAACE does not currently have specific figures to recommend.

Senator Brent Waltz questioned Ms. Hubbuch concerning the Indiana Department of Education's priorities concerning adult education. Senator Robert Deig raised the issue of whether moving toward a system with more regional programs would lead to transportation problems for students.

Representative Klinker next recognized Rochelle Finzel, Director of the Institute for Working Families within the Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues. Ms. Finzel stated that she had passed out the Institute's paper "More Than Just a GED" at the Committee's first meeting. She explained that the Institute is a statewide non-profit entity that does research on behalf of low-income persons.

Ms. Finzel stated that there are over 500,000 adults in Indiana who do not have at least a GED, and that 226,000 of these persons are in jobs that earn less than a living wage. She stated that with a very diverse population of adult education students, a "one-size-fits-all" approach will not work. She commented that while GEDs are important, it is necessary to tie adult education further into workplace needs. She also testified that Indiana ranks high in national performance standards for adult education, but that the performance measures should include all students and all skill levels.

Ms. Finzel questioned the proposal to expand the criteria for leaving school and commented that this proposal seems counter-intuitive. She stated that there is no evidence to show that the "administrative home" -- i.e., who runs the program -- makes a difference for adult education, but that the real issue is how much collaboration exists.

Ms. Finzel testified that she agrees with the proposal to allow state funding for providers other than school corporations. She recommended a larger allocation of funds be provided for adult education workplace training programs, which directly relate to needed skills. She also suggested that when evaluating and reporting on programs, all students and skill levels should be considered.

Ms. Finzel pointed out that two-thirds of the workforce in 2020 will not be affected by K - 12 programs, and that our current workforce will be the majority of our future workforce. She stressed the importance of: (1) defining the mission of adult education; (2) improving the alignment of funding streams and resources; and (3) establishing benchmarks and measuring performance.

Representative Robert Behning commented that he also questioned the proposal to change the drop-out criteria. In response to a question from Representative Behning, Ms. Finzel agreed that current adult education programs need to be more focused on workforce skills. Representative Behning also asked Ms. Finzel to provide the Committee with examples of what other states have done to combine workforce education and basic adult education.

Ms. Finzel testified that Indiana ranks in the top ten states in meeting federal goals, but that these goals can both underestimate and overestimate successes. Senator Tallian stated that no one had explained why there is a need to open up state funding to other providers. Senator Waltz stated that he is concerned about the use of the federal standards, and he commented that expanding the base of providers could make things even more complicated. Ms. Finzel replied that if performance systems and accountability measures are in place, expanding the pool of providers would not be a problem.

Representative Klinker then recognized Rebecca Nickoli, Vice President for Workforce and Economic Development at Ivy Tech Community College (Ivy Tech) and the chair of the Joyce Shifting Gears Policy Committee (Joyce Policy Committee). Ms. Nickoli described the work of the Joyce Foundation and explained that it had provided a \$1 million grant to help shift low-skill and low-wage adult workers into better jobs at a better wage.

Ms. Nickoli testified that the grant from the Joyce Foundation is funding several projects: (1) the College for Working Adults Initiative to meet the growing demand for educated adults in the workforce; (2) the Indiana Chamber of Commerce's performance report; (3) the Indiana Workforce Intelligence System; and (4) pilot programs for remediation. She then described the groups represented on the Joyce Policy Committee and its workings, and she stated that the Joyce Policy Committee is in the process of making recommendations.

Ms. Nickoli provided examples of preliminary recommendations from the Joyce Policy Committee: (1) a new entity should take over the Indiana Workforce Intelligence System; (2) there should be better access to financial aid for adult students; (3) a marketing campaign should be conducted to inform persons who could participate in adult education and to inform the public; and (4) there should be co-location of services and classes.

Representative Klinker noted that financial aid is available for a student only if the student is taking a certain number of credit hours.

Representative Klinker recognized Jeffrey Terp, Vice President for Engagement, Ivy Tech. Mr. Terp passed out to Committee members a copy of the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce's report "Indiana's Adult Education and Workforce Skills Performance Report -- Preparing Adults for a Brighter Future". (See Exhibit A.)

Mr. Terp discussed a number of issues raised in the report, and he pointed out the data showing that over 931,000 persons were not prepared for the workforce. Of these persons: (1) more than 651,000 persons had no college education and are earning less than a living wage; and (2) more than 524,000 persons have not completed high school. He also noted that all of the jobs included in the report's list of fastest-growing high-wage jobs (2002 to 2012) require more than a GED. He stated that if the focus is only high school students, it will be impossible to close this gap. Mr. Terp also stated that the goal is a seamless transition through the educational process.

Senator Waltz noted that the report shows that almost one in four Indiana adults is without a high school diploma or is not earning a living wage. He asked if this was a crisis, and he asked how, with increased plant closings, we would deal with these unemployed workers if they were not ready for new jobs. Senator Errington suggested that the need for child care and the problem of ex-offenders are two additional barriers that would have to be overcome.

Representative Klinker then recognized Dr. Ken Sauer, a member of the Joyce Policy Committee and the Senior Associate Commissioner for Research and Academic Affairs of the Indiana Commission on Higher Education. Dr. Sauer distributed a handout to the Committee. (See Exhibit B, "Presentation to the Interim Study Committee on Adult Education Issues".)

Dr. Sauer stated that approximately 22% of Indiana college students who were 2006 high school graduates needed remedial education courses. He described to Committee members other charts included in his handout.

Dr. Sauer said that the best place to address the need for remediation is in high school, but that Ivy Tech is the place to provide remediation for those students who do end up needing remediation during college. He testified that remedial course work should be phased out at other universities. Dr. Sauer stated that success rates for remedial education are low and need improvement, and he suggested that Ivy Tech should establish a floor below which remediation would not be provided. He commented that this would allow Ivy Tech to concentrate on students who need one or two remedial courses before pursuing college successfully.

Dr. Sauer suggested that some Indiana Department of Education adult basic education courses should be co-located with Ivy Tech's remedial programs. He then stated that there is a need to align assessment methods, curricula, materials, and expectations. He also suggested: (1) increasing financial aid for part-time adult education students; (2) keeping Ivy Tech's tuition and fees as low as possible; and (3) expanding training and third party certifications offered by state agencies, such as the Department of Workforce Development and the Family and Social Services Administration. Senator Tallian asked about the assessment of workers for placement in remedial programs. Representative Simms commented that there is no money available for remedial education programs in high schools. Senator Waltz expressed the concern that shifting programs to other providers could dilute the assistance provided to school corporations.

Representative Klinker recognized Joan Keller, Superintendent of North Spencer Community School Corporation. Superintendent Keller began by explaining that the

school corporation has approximately 2,100 students, and that four out of the six schools in the school corporation are "four-star" schools. She said that the school corporation's adult education center is a comprehensive program that receives federal and state funding.

Superintendent Keller testified that one problem with adult education is that the programs must be funded in part from the school corporation's general fund, even though approximately 72% of the students are not from the school district. She stated that she is not sure of the proper vehicle to provide adult education, and that it may be a mixed system. She commented that the K-12 system has highly qualified teachers, but that a waiver of certain requirements is allowed for adult education centers. Superintendent Keller also suggested the fostering of "soft skills" (such as an employee getting to work on time). She stated that school corporations need support to keep adult education centers open, and that they cannot keep using their general funds to pay for these programs.

Senator Tallian commented that the Committee had heard testimony about the value of adult education, but that it needed to hear about the amount of funding those programs need.

Representative Klinker recognized Terry Dietz, a professor at Valparaiso University and a teacher with the Portage Adult Education Program. Mr. Dietz described the accomplishments of the adult education program in Portage, noting that it serves a range of students, from those who are age 16 to those who are over sixty years of age. He described the approach of the students, staff, and administrators in Portage, and he stated that the issue is funding. He explained that the adult education program in Portage serves students from five or six different counties.

Representative Klinker then recognized Linda Woloshansky, President of the Center of Workforce Innovations. Ms. Woloshansky stressed the importance of accountability issues and the alignment of curriculum and services. She stated that funding is the key issue, and she noted that federal funding has declined while state funding has been flat.

Ms. Woloshansky testified that Texas provides school funding for students up to age 25, and that it provides \$5,800 per pupil above regular reimbursement. She testified that the combined federal, state, and local spending per adult education student in Indiana is approximately \$890, and she stated that funding must be increased for Indiana to stay competitive.

She questioned why anyone would consider \$890 per student to be adequate funding for adult education, given that the cost to educate a student in K-12 is over \$9,000 per student.

Representative Klinker recognized Chuck Mayfield of the Legislative Services Agency's Office of Fiscal and Management Analysis. Mr. Mayfield provided the Committee with two handouts: "Comparison of FY 2000 and 2009 Educational Appropriations" (Exhibit C) and "Adult Education Programs" (Exhibit D).

Mr. Mayfield described the handouts, and he stated that the cost per student of \$9,800 is for all educational expenses, including capital costs, transportation, and debt service. He testified that the cost for regular instruction is approximately \$5,600 per student, and he noted that adult education students are not necessarily in class six hours each school day.

Mr. Mayfield briefly explained the reimbursement process for adult education, and he stated that the total state reimbursement is limited to the amount of the appropriation in the

state budget for that purpose. He testified that the reimbursements are based on the salary and benefits for teachers providing the programs and on a portion of the administrative costs. If the requests for reimbursement exceed the appropriation, the reimbursements are reduced on a pro-rata basis. Senator Waltz commented that to determine the total amount being spent on adult education in Indiana, one would have to examine the fixed costs and the variable costs. He noted that the fixed costs are usually not additional costs of adult education programs. Senator Tallian stated that in Portage there is a building dedicated to adult education. Representative Leonard asked about federal funding sources. Senator Deig asked whether the Department of Workforce Development had ever reverted money back to the State.

Representative Klinker adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:10 p.m.